



MONTÉ HALE

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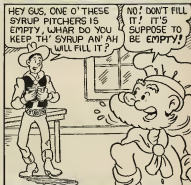
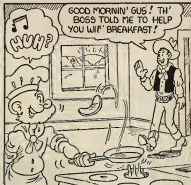
Monte Hale

WESTERN

10¢



MONTÉ HALE
THE **BIGGEST** AND **BOLDEST**
REAL-LIFE COWBOY OF THEM ALL
6 ft. 5 in. OF SOLID MUSCLE



MONTE HALE WESTERN



The following outstanding magazines are easily identified on their covers by the words "CHARLTON PUBLICATION"

ATOMIC MOUSE ★ BADGE OF JUSTICE ★ BLUE BEETLE ★ COWBOY LOVE ★ COWBOY WESTERN ★ DANGER and ADVENTURE ★ FUNNY ANIMALS—MERRY MAJMAN ★ GABBY HAYES ★ HOT RODS and RACING CARS ★ LASH LARUE ★ MONTE HALE ★ MY LITTLE MARGIE ★ ROCKY LANE ★ SIX-GUN HEROES ★ SOLDIER and MARINE ★ SPACE ADVENTURES—ROCKY JONES ★ SPACE RANGER ★ SWEETHEARTS ★ TEX RITTER ★ This is SUSPENSE ★ TRUE LIFE SECRETS ★ TV TEENS—DON WINSLOW of the NAVY ★ WIN-A-PRIZE ★ ZOO FUNNIES, NYOKA, JUNGLE GIRL

Every effort is made to assure that these comic magazines contain the highest quality of wholesome entertainment.

MONTE HALE

and The UNKNOWN BONANZA

Chapter ONE
THE BOTANICAL MENACE



WHAT IS THE UNKNOWN BONANZA? WHAT MYSTERIOUS WEALTH LIES HIDDEN IN THE WILD FOREST? AS A PIONEER FAMILY OF HOMESTEADERS SEEKS TO BUILD A HOME IN THE WILLOWOOD, RUTHLESS OUTLAWS STRIKE, AND ONLY MONTE HALE CAN FOIL THEM! THE GIANT COWBOY HERO SMASHES AGAINST ALL HAZARDS AND DANGERS IN THE STRANGEST MYSTERY OF THE WEST!

INTO THE SILENT HUSH OF THE WILDWOODS RIDES THE MIGHTY FIGURE OF MONTE HALE, COWBOY ADVENTURER OF THE WEST!



LOOKS LIKE A VIRGIN FOREST, PARTNER! PLENTY WILD!

I RECKON THIS IS ALL UNEXPLORED! PROBABLY NOT A SOUL AROUND FOR A HUNDRED MILES!



BUT MONTE IS WRONG, FOR SUDDENLY...

EUREKA!



SOMEBODY YELLING! DID DIRT, PART!



EUREKA!

WHAT'S WRONG?

WHAT'S WRONG? I WASN'T YELLING FOR HELP! I SAID--EUREKA! I'M IN NO DANGER, YOU IDIOT!

RECKON I JUMPED THE GUN!



BUT WHO ARE YOU? AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING ALONE IN THIS WILD NECK OF THE WOODS?

DID YOU FIND SOME RARE PLANT?

I STUMBLED ACROSS THE--UH--WELL, IT'S--UH--!

THERE! FEAST YOUR EYES UPON THE--ADANTUM FELIGIES HERBACEOUS! A VERY RARE FERN WITH MODULATE SPORES AND...

THE WHAT? LOOKS LIKE A PLAIN OLD FERN TO ME! WELL, I'LL BE RIDING ALONG!



WELL, THAT WAS A SURPRISE, PARD!
BUT I RECKON WE WON'T MEET ANY
MORE FOLKS IN THIS WILDER--

WHAT--AGAIN?
I'M BEGINNING TO
THINK THIS WDDOS IS
CRAMMED WITH
PEOPLE! MAKE
TRACKS, PARD!

HELP!

HELP!

A WILDCAT!
IT'S GOING AFTER
THE GIRL!

SHOOTING WON'T STOP HIS
LEAP--BUT THIS WILL!

NOW GET!
THANK HEAVEN YOU
CAME ALONG, SIR!

MONTE HAILS AT YOUR
SERVICE, MAM! WHAT ARE
YOU DOING IN THIS
WILD FOREST?

MY NAME
IS BETTY
DOBBINSON!
I'M HERE WITH
MY FAMILY!

SO YOU'RE HOME-
STEADERS MAKING
A HOME OUT OF
THE WILDERNESS!
AND ACCORDING TO
THE HOMESTEADING
ACT, YOU'LL OWN
THIS WHOLE SECTION
IF YOU STICK IT
OUT!

YES, WE'RE
CLEARING
PART OF THE
FOREST FOR
FARMLAND
AND BUILD-
ING OUR
OWN LOG
CABIN!

BANG!

MY PA, CLEM DOBBINSON!
AND MY MA, MIRANDA!

ROWDY! I ADMIRE BRAVE
FOLKS LIKE YOU! YOU'RE
MAKING THE WEST
GREAT!

GRAB SKY,
MISTER! GOT
A DEAD BEAR
ON YOU!

OH, YES, AND MY
BROTHER TOMMY!
RIGHT NOW HE'S A
SHERIFF! LAST YEEH
HE WAS A RAILROAD
ENGINEER!

STAY
AND HAVE
BITTLES
WITH US,
MONTE!

I SURE WILL,
MR DOBBINSON!
I'D BE A FOOL TO
PASS UP THAT
INVITATION!



PUZZLED AT THE SINISTER MYSTERY,
MONTE HALE SEARCHES UNTIL.....



BY THE TIME MONTE CLEARS HIS SMARTING EYES....

GONE! BUT WHAT WAS HIS BIG STRIKE? I'LL SASHAY AROUND THE FOREST AND SEE IF I CAN UNCOVER IT!



BUT LATER, AFTER A WIDE SEARCH...

NO SIGNS OF ANYTHING VALUABLE! THERE'S NOTHING BUT PLAIN BLACK DIRT ALL OVER THIS WOODS! PURDY'S BOMANZA HAS ME STUMPED! BUT I'O BETTER GET BACK TO THE DOBBINSONS! PURDY MAY STRIKE AGAIN!



MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE CABIN, THE CUNNING BOTANIST IS ALREADY AT WORK!

THESE ARE AND DANGEROUS POPPIES HAVE AN OVERPOWERING SCENT WHEN CRUSHED DUE TO A DEADLY DRUG IN THEM! THE FUMES WILL SOON OVERCOME THE FAMILY!



SOON, AS THE FATAL FLOWERS DO THEIR WORK.....

GOSH, I FEEL TIRED AND SLEEPY...

DIZZY--NEED FRESH AIR... OHHHH...



IT WORKED! THEY ALL FELL INTO A COMA! NOW WITH THE CABIN ON FIRE, THEY'LL BURN TO DEATH!

AND WHEN MONTE ARRIVES....

FIRE! THIS IS PURDY'S WORK AGAIN!



UNCONSCIOUS! IF I TAKE TIME TO CARRY THEM ALL OUT, THE FIRE WILL HAVE A CHANCE TO SPREAD AND BURN DOWN THE WHOLE CABIN! BUT I KNOW A WAY!

IN A FEW MINUTES....

WET GREENS CAN SMOOTHER A FIRE! THERE! THEY SNUFFED IT OUT BEFORE IT REALLY SPREAD OVER THE CABIN!

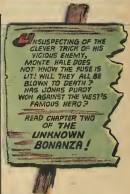
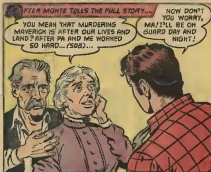


LATER, AS MONTE BRINGS THEM OUT IN THE OPEN AIR....

MONTE! YOU SAVED US AND OUR CABIN!

WE'LL HAVE TO BE ON CONSTANT GUARD AGAINST PURDY FROM NOW ON! I GUESS PARDNER AND I WILL STAY WHILE!





SAM the SHERIFF



PECOS PETE / AH
BEEN A LOOKIN' FER
YOU ALL! DRAW!



AHA! GOT THE
DROP ON YUH BUCK!
NOW YUH DIE!

HEY WAIT,
PECOS / AH
CAINT GIT
MAH GUN
OUT!



THET AINT NO EXCUSE,
BUCK! START A SAYIN'
YORE PRAYERS, BOY!

SOME DIRTY
COYOTE POURED
MOLASSAS IN
MAH HOLSTER



YEOW! I'M
OUT OF BULLETS!

AH KNEW YUH
COULDN'T HIT
WITH THET
PEA SHOOTER!



DROP THEM GUNS, YUH
HOMBRES! THIS IS THE
LAW A TALKIN'
WHOA, NELL!



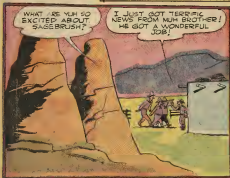
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GOL-DURNED, NELL, AH AINT
NEVER GONNA ARREST ANY
OF THESE HOMBRES IF
YUH DONT LEARN TO
WHOA!





"KEEPS MOVING!"



SEEDS OF FRIENDSHIP

A Gray Hawk Story



IT WAS A-San-To, the planting moon, and all of the tribespeople of the Otapi were busy in their fields planting the spring crop of maize. Carefully they plowed and loosened the rich black soil, then planted the little yellow grains one by one! All of the members of the tribe worked at this task; the little children, the stripplings, the squaws and the husky grown warriors. Side by side bent young Gray Hawk and his chieftain father Gray Eagle.

Suddenly there was the sound of a horse riding up, and the men of the Otapi straightened, instantly alert. There had been rumors of the Shawanga, a distant plains tribe, going on the warpath—and they had to be prepared for trouble. But this was no Shawanga, but a white farmer. Clad in brown homespun, with a shaggy yellow beard that fell to his chest, he reined his giant plowhorse in and waved a hand in friendly greeting.

"Howdy," he called. "I'm Tom Cooley, gents. Been farming forty acres down near Fort Patterson! My corn seed went mouldy in the overland trip so I thought I'd come by to see if you'd fend . . . or sell me some. Soldiers over at the fort said you Otapi were peaceable!"

Gray Eagle spoke in reply, his face expressionless. "We are peaceable, white man, but we will not lend or sell you our maize. Why should we help you take over our land? No!"

As the broad-shouldered chief turned away, his son caught at his arm. "But father," Gray Hawk protested, "this white man is friendly! We should be neighborly with him! Let us give him enough maize seed to make a first crop!"

Gray Eagle scowled at his impetuous son. "No!" he said, "it is our will . . . the will of the elders of the Otapi. Now, white man, go!"

Tom Cooley rode off, disappointed. But late that afternoon, when he reached the crude log cabin that he called home, he found Gray Hawk waiting for him with a deerskin filled with corn seed. The Indian youth explained

that he was doing this against the will of the elders because he believed it to be right! He would accept nothing in payment, but hurried off swiftly through the forest . . .

When Gray Hawk arrived at the camp of the Otapis, he found his father and several other tribesmen waiting for him grimly. "You were seen going into the forest carrying a heavy deerskin," the chief began. "Where is that skin, my son?"

Silently, the boy held it forward. The chief examined it, turned it inside-out, and frowned to see several tiny corn seeds drop from its creases. "So . . ." he said heavily, "you disobeyed our will, Gray Hawk . . ."

The youth drew himself up, proudly and ram-rod stiff. His eyes scanned the bitter suspicious countenance of his elders. As one, they stared at him. "Yes—I did," he replied eagerly. "I know that the white men have treated us badly in the past, but these settlers who have begun to farm near Fort Patterson wish to live only in peace. We should help them and live side by side with them! I brought him the maize; it was my own. I had raised it last year. Am I to be punished for that?"

As he confronted the surly older warriors of the tribe, there was a moment of tense silence!

Then, suddenly, a shriek rent the air, and an eagle-feathered shaft fell to the ground at their feet! It was striped red and black, the war token of the Shawanga tribe! Evidently the plains warriors had decided to attack! Even now they circled the Otapi village, stalking behind bushes and scrub trees! Their tomahawks were in hand, their arrow notches fitted to their taut bowstrings. The tribe was in grave danger . . .

"Quick!" shouted Gray Eagle, "take cover! Squaws and papooses in the community tepees! You braves—get behind those boulders! Hold the Shawanga off!"

Swiftly, the warriors of the Otapi raced to do their leader's bidding.

All thought of his impending punishment forgotten, Gray Hawk found himself behind a gnarled oak with two other Otapi braves. In the forest that surrounded the village lurked the war-painted party of Shawanga fighters. Many in number, fierce and powerful, they were a dreadful foe. Now the arrows began to hiss through the air and the long lances with barbs that were like a pickerel's backbone! More than one Otapi fighter fell forward, choking on his lifeblood, as the Shawanga braves shouted cruel cries of triumph. But the invaders were not going unscathed! Again and again, the accurate fire of the Otapi archers struck home and Otapi tomahawks clove the skulls of those Shawanga warriors who were unwary enough to venture into waiting ambushes . . .

So the battle continued equally as night-fall crept over the forest. The Otapi elders gathered in worried consultation, leaving a few sentries to guard against surprise attacks. "We are in deadly peril," husked Gray Eagle. "The attack was too sudden—we had no time to fetch water or food to the village in special stores. If they continue to encircle us we will soon run out of water! We will grow weak and they will triumph! They are too many for us even now, for several of our young braves are off on hunting trips . . ."

Gray Hawk lifted his head eagerly. "Perhaps I could get down to the creek to fetch water, father," he began. "Or perhaps I might even get through the Shawanga lines, to fetch help . . ."

His father shook his head grimly. "No chance of that! They would be too clever—too alert, to let you pass by. And even if you could get through—who could we call upon for help? Our hunting parties are too far away. No, we must fight it out ourselves!"

So it went! Through the next day and night, they fought off the persistent Shawanga attacks. But now the food was all gone and the water too! Already the pangs of thirst were beginning to weaken the tired Otapi braves who had been without rest for so long. Now the enemy warriors were beginning to gather for another deadly assault! Gray Hawk and the others could see them flitting through the bushes in greater numbers. Evidently they had been joined by reinforcements! Could there be any stopping them?

Again a red and black striped arrow streaked through the air—and the attack was on!

But suddenly, as the Shawanga filled the air with jubilant boasts of triumph, a new sound was heard!

It was the thin, brassy blast of a trumpet—and with it came a storm of blue-coated white men! Army troopers from Fort Patterson suddenly blazed through the brush, firing their heavy Springfield rifles at the surprised Shawanga attackers! Given new hope, the Otapi rushed forward, sending deadly volleys of arrows at the Shawanga. Caught between two merciless attacks, the plains Indians wavered, and then, shrieking in fear, fled. A few of them were cut down in flight, but the others stampeded safely into the forest, leaving their weapons behind, flung to every side . . .

Up rode a white officer, reining in his excited bay.

"Chief!" he shouted, spying Gray Eagle, "glad to see we got here in time! We've had orders to prevent marauding among the Indian tribes in this section—but we sure wouldn't have known about this in time to act if it hadn't been for Tom Cooley here!"

He waved a thumb at the big, yellow-bearded farmer who ran up, clutching a long musket! "Shucks," Cooley exclaimed, "I started to come up here yesterday to thank you folks for the store of corn the boy left me when I heard sounds of a battle. As soon as I saw you were being attacked by the Shawanga, I figured they'd want to know about it at Fort Patterson. So I hurried over there and the captain and his boys volunteered to put a stop to the ruckus. I reckon if you really want to thank someone, Chief, it'd be the boy yonder!"

ALL EYES turned toward Gray Hawk, standing battle-stained and weary.

The chief put a hand on his son's shoulder and said proudly, "It is not the first time we owe him thanks for saving our tribe! But this time, he has taught us something new—that seeds of corn may also be seeds of friendship!"

THE END

Follow GRAY HAWK'S adventures in future
issues of MONTE HALE WESTERN



THE WORST PART ABOUT RUNNING FOR OFFICE IS ALL THE TIME I HAVE TO WASTE VISITING THESE FARMERS AND CHEWING THE RAG WITH THEM SO THEY'LL VOTE FOR ME!

THAT'S FARMER SMITH! HE'S PRETTY INFLUENTIAL AROUND HERE! I'D LIKE TO GET IN HIS GOOD GRACES! I KNOW WHAT I'LL DO! I'LL MILK HIS COW FOR HIM! HE'LL BE SO GRATEFUL HE'LL TELL EVERYBODY TO VOTE FOR ME!



HOWDY, FARMER SMITH! I'D BE RIGHT HONORED IF YUH'D LET ME MILK YORE COW FOR YUH! DO YUH MIND?

COURSE NOT! GO RIGHT AHEAD!



ER, I SUPPOSE MY POOR OPPONENT HAS BEEN ELECTIONEERING AROUND THESE PARTS!

SHORE THING--



---HE'S MILKING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COW!

(GASP)!!!



HOWDY, BROWN! ARE YUH STILL STAYING AT BLAKE'S BOARDINGHOUSE?

YUP!



HAVE YUH A ROOM FOR YOURSELF?

WHY, NO! THAR'S AN HOMBRE ROOMING WITH ME!



IS THAT SO?

YUP! AND IT'S A FUNNY THING, HE NEVER LEAVES THE ROOM!



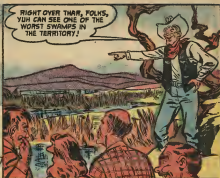
HUH? HOW COME HE DOESN'T LEAVE THE ROOM? DOESN'T HE WORK?

NO...



... HE'S JUST AN IDLE ROOMER!

OLD SLICK



MONTE HALE

and *The* UNKNOWN BONANZA

Chapter TWO—BATTLE AT THE CABIN

THE DYNAMITE FUSE BURNS SHORTER AND SHORTER! ONLY SECONDS REMAIN BEFORE THE BLAST WILL SHUFF OUT THE LIVES OF MONTE HALE AND THE PIONEER FAMILY! AND THEY ARE UNAWARE OF THEIR DOOM!

ALL SAFE, MONTE?

NO SIGN OF DUROY, BETTY! ALL CLEAR!

THE EXPLOSION IS ALMOST DUE!



WHINNYYYYYY
WHAT'S THE MATTER, PARDNER? WHOA, BOY! WHEN YOU ACT LIKE THIS IT MEANS DANGER, BUT I DON'T SEE ANYTHING AROUND! I GUESS YOU'RE JUST FRISKY!

BUT PARDNER, WITH THE KEEN SENSES OF AN INTELLIGENT HORSE, KNOWS THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG!

PARDNER, HAVE YOU GONE LOCO? WHERE ARE YOU PULLING ME? WAIT! THAT NOISE--!

IT'S DYNAMITE--READY TO GO OFF!
THERE'S NO TIME FOR ANYONE TO RUN
OUT OF RANGE! THERE'S NO TIME FOR
ANYTHING EXCEPT---



---TO GRAB IT UP! IF IT GOES
OFF IN MY HANDS, WE'RE
DONE FOR!



CAN THE COURAGEOUS COWBOY
FLING IT AWAY IN TIME --OR
IS IT TOO LATE?

BOOM!



JONAS PURDY NEARLY
BLEW US UP!



I'M GOING
TO GET THAT
MURDERER NOW!
HE MUST BE
CLOSE BY!

SO THAT'S HOW HE DID IT--
USING CAMOUFLAGE! I'LL
RUN HIM DOWN LIKE
A SNAKE!



MONTE HALE SAVED THEM AGAIN!
BUT IF HE THINKS HE'S GOING TO HAD
ME NOW, HE'S DUE FOR A SURPRISE!
I'M FULL OF BOTANICAL TRICKS!
I'LL DO THIS
WAY AND...

SUDDENLY...



A THICK VINE! PURDY HAD IT
STRETCHED BETWEEN TWO TREES
FOR JUST SUCH A TIME, I RECKON!
THAT WISE COLLECTOR IS
CUNNING!



ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, PARD?
NO BROKEN BONES! WE
BOTH GOT OFF LUCKY!



AND THAT GIVES US A CHANCE TO
RUN DOWN PURDY AFTER ALL! THERE
HE IS! MAKE TRACKS, PARD!

BANG!
BANG!

JONAS PURDY EMPLOYS ANOTHER
WILY RUSE!

I'LL CRAWL
SAFELY THROUGH THESE
STINGING NETTLES! BUT
WHEN MONTE HALE RIDES INTO
THEM, HIS HORSE WILL GO
WILD AND BUCK HIM OFF!

I'M ON TO HIS TRICKS NOW!
JUMP, PARDNER! CLEAR
THE STINGING NETTLES
AND WE'RE SAFE!

NOTHING CAN SAVE YOU NOW, PURDY!
STOP, OR YOU'LL GET A SLUG IN
YOUR LEG!

BANG!

DON'T SHOOT!
I KNOW WHEN
I'M LIGKEO!

WAIT!

WHAT?
WHO...?

DON'T GIVE UP, MISTER! ANY
HOMBRE ON THE LAM IS
A FRIEND OF US OUTLAWS!
WE'LL GET RID OF HIM
AND SAVE YUH!

MONTE HALE IS TAKEN UNAWARES
BY THE UNEXPECTED AMBUSH!

MAKE TRACKS, PARD! WE DON'T
STAND A CHANCE AGAINST THOSE
HIDDEN GUNS! OF ALL THE LUCK--
PURDY GETS SAVED BY BADMEN!

BANG!
BANG!
BANG!

MEANWHILE, EVIL SOULS MEET!

COYOTE CAL'S MY HANDLE, PARD!
ME AND MY MEN CAME TO THE
TALL WOODS TO HIDE OUT
A WHILE!

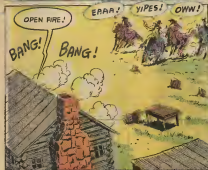
REAL BADMEN, EH?
WONDERFUL! I'M JONAS
PURDY, AND I'VE GOT A
PROPOSITION FOR YOU
OUTLAWS!

THIS WOODS IS LOADED WITH
RICHES! A TERRIFIC BONANZA!
BUT WE'VE GOT TO KILL OFF
THOSE HOMESTEADERS! I'LL
SPLIT MY FIND WITH YOU!
IS IT A BARGAIN?



MISTER, YOU JUST GOT YOUR-
SELF A PARONER! IT'S A DEAL!
WE'LL WIPE 'EM OUT AT
THEIR CABIN!







CLOSE IN! STORM THE CABIN!
THEY'RE ALL TRAPPED
INSIDE!



AM I,
PARD?

ULPS! WHO'S SHOOTING AT
US FROM THE BACK?

BANG!



MONTE
HALE!

RIGHT! I SNEAKED OUT
FROM THE CABIN BEFORE
TO PULL THIS COUNTER-
ATTACK!



UTTERLY DISCONCERTED BY THE
MANEUVER, THE BADMAN FLEE
ONCE MORE!

THAT JASPER
ISN'T HUMAN! BACK TO
THE WOODS!



FIVE ATTACKERS TAKE STOCK OF
THE DEADLOCKED SITUATION!

BLAST IT! HOW CAN
WE WIN WITH THAT
HALE HOMER
AROUND?

WE'VE GOT
TO PLAN
SOMETHING
REAL GOOD!



WHAT WILL THEY TRY NEXT?
IF I ONLY KNEW!



I'M GOING TO FIND OUT!
RECKON I CAN REACH
THE WOODS UNSEEN,
FROM STUMP TO
STUMP!

GOOD
LUCK,
MONTE!



NOW TO EAVESDROP
ON THEIR PLANS!

BUT TO THE BOTANIST, A TELLTALE GLUE GIVES AWAY MONTE'S PRESENCE!

Hsst! DON'T TURN, COYOTE CAL, BUT THESE FLOATING SEED SPORES SHOW THAT THEIR PODS WERE DISTURBED HEARBY! SOMEBODY SNEAKED UP BACK OF US!

I'LL SNEAK UP ON HIM!



MONTE HALE
HIMSELF!



LIGHTS OUT,
PARD!

WHOP!
OHHH!



WHEN MONTE COMES TO....

I'LL TAKE CARE OF HALE!
YOU MEN ATTACK THE CABIN
NOW! WITHOUT HIS HELP,
THEY'LL WEAKEN!



NOW, MY FRIEND, I'LL FINISH
YOU OFF IN MY OWN SPECIAL
BOTANICAL WAY! A FEW DROPS
OF DEADLY NIGHTSHADE
JUICE ON THIS
THORN AND....



...YOU'LL DIE
FROM THE
POISON!



BUT IT WON'T BE A QUICK DEATH,
HALE! THE POISON PRODUCES AGONY
AND PAIN FOR FIVE MINUTES BEFORE
IT KILLS! YOU'LL BEG ME TO SHOOT
YOU BEFORE IT'S OVER!

IS IT THE END FOR
GALLANT MONTE
HALE? HAVING
ESCAPED DEATH
COUNTLESS TIMES
FROM OTHER
VIOLENT AGENCIES,
WILL HE NOW DIE IN
TORMENT FROM
A STRANGE
PLANT POISON?

READ THREE
OF THE
**UNKNOWN
BONANZA!**

BRONKO BETSY SLOWS UP!



EXTRA!! the BLUE BEETLE RETURNS!!!

THE BLUE BEETLE

AMERICA'S CRUSADER
OF
LAW AND ORDER

10¢ NOW AT YOUR LOCAL NEWSSTAND! 10¢



GABBY HAYES

in THE
ALARMING
ADVENTURE

HESTER:
LEAVE \$1000 IN THE
STRANGLER'S HAND OR
GABBY HAYES WILL BE
DEAD BEFORE THE
END OF THE WEEK.
AND I'LL BLOW UP THE
RANCH, TOO.
DYNAMITE D.

AUNT HESTER GETS
THE MAIL...ONE LETTER
...AND IT TURNS OUT
TO BE BLACKMAIL !

HEAVENS !



BAR-NOTHING
RANCH

U.S.
MAIL

OH, THIS IS HORRIBLE !
AND I DON'T DARE TELL
GABBY OR HE'D GO TRAMP-
ING OUT TO LOOK FOR THIS
MYSTERIOUS DYNAMITE D.
AND GET HIMSELF
KILLED, MOST
LIKELY .

I'LL PUT OUT THE THOUSAND
DOLLARS . BUT I'LL HAVE TO WAIT
TILL TOMORROW . IT'S TOO LATE
TO GO TO THE BANK TODAY !

NIGHTFALL...
AND A
SINISTER
FIGURE
MOVES
CAUTIOUSLY
TOWARD
THE DEAD
TREE
KNOWN AS
THE
STRANGLER'S
HAND !

CURSES ! THAT
RICH OLD HESTER
DIDN'T LEAVE
ANYTHING FOR
ME !

NEXT DAY, OUT ON THE RANGE ...

IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR THE MAIL. KEEP A-WORKING, BOYS, WHILE I HOSSEY BACK TO THE HOUSE AND SEE WHAT WE GOT.



AS GABBY RIDES BACK, HESTER HAS ALREADY TAKEN THE MAIL FROM THE BOX ... A PACKAGE AND A LETTER!

YOU'LL BE SORRY!
DYNAMITE D.



HEAVENS! IT'S TICKING! IT MUST BE A TIME BOMB!



HEY, HESTER! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

THIS PACKAGE IS TICKING! IT MUST BE A BOMB! I'M DROPPING IT!



I HOPE IT'S NOT PLUMB RUINED!



HOOTING HAYRIDES, HESTER! YUH DANG NEAR WRECKED THIS NEW ALARM CLOCK I GOT FROM THE MAIL ORDER HOUSE!

A CLOCK!



I'LL PUT THIS HERE IN THE BUNKHOUSE! IT'LL ROOST THE LAZY RANNIES IN TIME FOR THE MORNING CHORES!



NIGHT--AS AUNT HESTER SIPS OUT THE FRONT DOOR---

I'LL LEAVE THIS MONEY FOR DYNAMITE D. TONIGHT. THEN HE'LL SPARE GABBY'S LIFE!



AROUND BACK, A PAIR OF FUN-LOVING COW-HANDS MOVE STEALTHILY.

GABBY'S ASLEEP! HEAR HIM SNORING?

WE'LL PUT THIS OLD TIMEPIECE RIGHT NEXT TO HIS PILLOW. HE'LL JUMP A MILE WHEN IT GOES OFF!



A FEW MINUTES LATER...

BONG!
BONG!
BONG!

YIPES!



HALF-ASLEEP, GABBY THINKS IT'S A FIRE ALARM.



OOF!

WHOMP!

HA! HA!
HO! HO! HO!

THESE PUNCHES DONE PLAYED A JOKE ON ME WITH MY OWN CLOCK! I BETTER GET RID OF THE BLAMED CONTRAPTION, OR THEY'LL DO THE SAME EVERY NIGHT!



I'LL TOSS THE DADGURN THING INTO THE STRANGLER'S HAND. THEY'LL NEVER FIND IT THERE---NOBODY GOES NEAR THAT SPOOKY TREE.



HIS MISSION ACCOMPLISHED, GABBY RETURNS TO FIND HESTER WEeping.

SOB! SOB
GABBY'S
MISSING!
DYNAMITE O.
KIDNAPED
HIM!

HEY, HESTER! CUT THE
SELLERING! WHO'S
DYNAMITE O?



UNDER GABBY'S QUESTION-
ING, HESTER BREAKS DOWN
AND TELLS ALL.

...AND SO I DID WHAT
THE NOTE SAID. I PUT A
THOUSAND DOLLARS IN A
PACKAGE AND LEFT IT
IN THAT HOLLOW TREE.



I'LL GET THAT
MONEY BACK AND
CATCH THE WARRINT,
TOO!

OH, GABBY, DO
BE CAREFUL.
HE'S A
KILLER!



AT THAT MOMENT ---

HA, TWO PACKAGES! MUST BE
FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS IN EACH
ONE! OH, OH! A HORSE COMING.
I'D BETTER HIDE!



THE MONEY'S
GONE! BUT
I'LL GET IT
BACK IF I
HAVE TO
TRAIL THAT
SIDEWINDER
TO THE ENDS
OF THE
EARTH!

HEH-HEH! WE'LL
NEVER THINK OF
LOOKING FOR ME
UP HERE!



ALL RIGHT, DYNAMITE O.,
CLAMBER DOWN AND
GET READY FOR THE
CALABOOSE. BUT FIRST,
TOSS OUT THAT PESKY
CLOCK!

Y-YES,
SIR!

BONG!
BONG!



THAT'S JUST A
SAMPLE OF
WHAT I'LL HAPPEN
TO YORE WORKS,
MISTER, IF YUM
TRY ANY MONKEY
BUSINESS!

BOINGGG!

UPL!

BANG!



gopher- face

MARBLE HEAD!

WHAT ARE YUH
DOING OUTSIDE THE
HOSPITAL, GOPHERFACE?

(SIGH) MY
POOR UNCLE
IS INSIDE!

HOSPITAL

YOUR UNCLE
IS IN THE
HOSPITAL?
WHY, WHAT'S
THE MATTER
WITH HIM?

HE ATE A
PIECE OF MARBLE
CAKE I MADE IN
HIS HONOR AND
HE GOT VERY
SICK!

HE GOT VERY
SICK WHEN HE ATE
A PIECE OF THE
MARBLE CAKE YUH
MADE? JEEPER,
WHAT DID YUH
PUT IN IT?

MARBLES,
OF COURSE!

(GASP)!

YUH PUT MARBLES IN THE CAKE?
NO WONDER YOUR POOR UNCLE
IS SO SICK! HAVE THEY
OPERATED ON HIM YET?

NO!
THEY'VE
TRIED,
BUT...

OSP...HE KEEPS ROLLING
OFF THE TABLE!

(GASP)!!!

MONTE HALE

and The Unknown Bonanza

Chapter THREE THE SECRET IS TOLD!

WHILE COYOTE GAL AND HIS BADMEN RIDE TO ATTACK THE CABIN AGAIN, MONTE HALE FACES DEATH BY THE PRICK OF A POISONED THORN HELD BY THE SINISTER BOTANIST!

I'VE GOT TO
PLAY FOR TIME
IF I CAN!

GET READY FOR
THE THORN, HALE!

WAIT, PURDY! TELL ME WHAT THE
BIG BONANZA IS THAT YOU FOUND IN
THE FOREST HERE! THAT'S THE LEAST
YOU CAN GRANT ME BEFORE
I DIE!

SURE, HALE,
I'LL TELL
YOU!

WHAT I FOUND WAS --- NO! WHY TELL
YOU? THAT'LL BE THE BEST TORTURE
OF ALL, LETTING YOU DIE WITHOUT
KNOWING WHAT MY BIG MYSTERY
STRIKE IS! HAW, HAW!
THIS IS GREAT!

THE FIEND! BUT AT LEAST I
GAINED TIME! HE DIDN'T
NOTICE I'VE BEEN STRAIN-
ING ALL THIS TIME! NOW
FOR ONE BIG HEAVE,
AND ---

HA! HA!
HA!



TROUBLE IS,
MONTE, OUR
AMMUNITION
IS RUNNING
OUT!

HMM, THAT'S BAD!
ANOTHER ATTACK
AND WE'LL BE
DEFENSELESS!

WAIT, NIGHT IS COMING!
SOMEBODY CAN SNEAK AWAY
AND BRING OUTSIDE HELP! I'VE
GOT TO STAY OF COURSE, BUT
ARE YOU GAME TO TRY IT,
BETTY?

SURE, MONTE!

YOU CAN GET AWAY NOW
BEFORE THE MOON COMES UP!
WALK YOUR HORSE QUIETLY A
MILE AWAY, AND THEN RIDE TO
THE NEAREST TOWN FOR A
POSSE! GOOD LUCK!



A WHILE LATER...

I DON'T THINK THOSE YARMINTS
WILL TRY A NIGHT ATTACK UNDER
A FULL MOON! THEY'LL SLEEP!
THAT'LL GIVE BETTY TELL DAWN
TO BRING BACK THE POSSE!



BUT AGAIN, JONAS PURDY'S
BOTANICAL SENSES ARE ON
THE ALERT!

WE'VE GOT 'EM
HOLED UP FOR THE
NIGHT! LET'S GET
SOME REST FOR
TOMORROW'S
ATTACKS!

SNIFF!
WAIT!
THAT
FLOWER
SCENT!



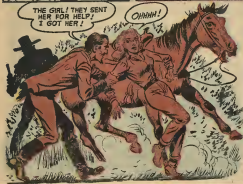
SNIFF! NOBODY CAN SNEAK
THROUGH A PATCH OF SCENTED
FLOWERS WITHOUT
SENDING PERFUME
FAR AND WIDE!
IT'S LIKE A
RIPPLE IN
A POND!

SOMEBODY
SNEAKING
AWAY, EH?
LET'S GET 'EM!



THE GIRL! THEY SENT
HER FOR HELP!
I GOT HER!

OHNNN!



THE BOTANIST QUICKLY TAKES
ADVANTAGE OF THE CAPTURE!



THIS IS PERFECT! NOW WE CAN LURE
MONTE AWAY FROM THE CABIN—
TO SAVE THE GIRL'S LIFE! HERE'S
WHAT WE'LL DO AT DAWN....

AT DAWN, MONTE GETS THE BAD NEWS!

HELLO, HALE! LISTEN CLOSELY!
WE CAPTURED THE GIRL LAST NIGHT!
IF YOU WANT HER BACK ALIVE, YOU'LL
HAVE TO GO RESCUE HER!

**AS PLANNED BY PURDY, MONTE
FACES A MADDENING CHOICE!**

IF I LEAVE YOU, THEY'LL
ATTACK! IF I STAY, BETTY'S
LIFE IS IN DANGER!

MY GIRL!
DON'T LET HER
DIE, MONTE!
WE'LL HOLD OFF
THE ATTACK AS
LONG AS WE
CAN! GO!

HE'S RIGHT! I CAN'T LET
HER DIE HELPLESSLY!
MAKE TRACKS,
PARD!

IT WORKED! WE DIVIDED THEIR
FORCES! WE'LL TAKE THE CABIN
WITH HALE GONE NOW! AND HE
WON'T COME BACK ALIVE FROM
VARMINT GULCH! WE FIXED
UP A SURE-FIRE TRAP
THERE!

**A LONG, HARD RIDE BRINGS
MONTE TO VARMINT GULCH!**

AN UNARMED PERSON
HASN'T A CHANCE HERE!
BETTY! BETTY!
WHERE ARE
YOU?

**HELP!
HURRY!**

THANK
HEAVEN
SHE'S STILL
ALIVE!
**COMING,
BETTY!**



AND THOSE LOWDOWN COYOTES GUT
DOWN THE BRIDGE THAT WAS HERE!
ONLY WAY ACROSS IS TO JUMP! BUT
FOR A HORSE, IT'S THE LONGEST
JUMP I'VE EVER SEEN!



I'VE GOT TO TRY EVEN THOUGH
I KNOW NO HORSE CAN MAKE IT
CARRYING A MAN! IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE!



IT'S MONTE HALE DESPERATELY
RIDING TO SURE DEATH?

THIS IS A TRAP THEY PLANNED
FOR ME AND BETTY! IF I DON'T
JUMP, BETTY DIES! IF I DO JUMP,
IT'S A HUNDRED-TO-ONE AGAINST
MAKING IT!



I'LL EXPLAIN TO THE SHERIFF AND BRING THE POSSE, MONTE!

RIGHT, BETTY! BACK TO THE CABIN FOR ME! MAKE TRACKS, PARD!

I ONLY HOPE IT'S NOT TOO LATE AND PURDY AND COYTE CAL DIDN'T STORM THE CABIN BY NOW AND WIPE OUT THE DOBBINSONS!



BUT THE BRAVE PIONEER FAMILY STILL HOLDS OUT, FIGHTING TO THE LAST DITCH!



AND FINALLY---TO THE LAST BULLET!



NO MORE AMMUNITION! BE BRAVE, MA AND TOMMY! THIS IS IT!

MONTE HALE ARRIVES AND...



OH, OH, THE DOBBINSONS ARE OUT OF AMMUNITION! IT'S UP TO US, PARD! I'VE GOT A PLAN!

IT'S THE CONBOY NERO RIDING TO CERTAIN DEATH?



COME ON, PARD! IF MY ARM IS TRUE, ONE SHOT IS ALL I NEED TO GET---

---THAT BUSH! IF I BURST ENOUGH OF THOSE PODS AND LET THE FINE SPORES SPREAD LIKE DUST, A FIT OF SNEEZING WILL GET THE BADMEN!





IT WORKED! THEY ALL GOT A BIG DOSE! IT'S LIKE HAYFEVER!



KACHOO!

GESUNDHEIT!

BAM!

BEFORE THE CONFUSION IS OVER AND THE BADMEN CAN RECOVER, THE POSSE ARRIVES!



THEY'LL TAKE CARE OF DOTE GRL AND HIS MEN! WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THE OTHERS - GUARDY!



YOUR GOOSE IS COOKED, PUDDY! LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO THE WELL-KNOWN PRICKLY PLANT!

OWW!



AND THAT OTHER BUSH WAS A RARE ONE KNOWN AS THE SNEEZE BUSH OR PEPPER BUSH! AND I KNOW YOUR BIG SECRET NOW, PUDDY! I FIGURED IT OUT! I SHOULD HAVE SUSPECTED BEFORE!



GINSENG IS A VALUABLE MEDICINAL HERB THAT SELLS AS HIGH AS A HUNDRED DOLLARS A POUND! YOU FOUND THE WOODS HERE LOADED WITH IT! GREEN GOLD! WORTH A FORTUNE! SO YOU PLOTTED TO WIPE OUT THE HOME-STEADERS AND CASH IN ON IT!



LATER...

WE WON'T EVEN HAVE TO FRAM NOW, JUST PICK GINSENG LEAVES AND SELL THEM! HOW CAN WE REWARD YOU FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE, MONTE?

I JUST HAD MY REWARD, BETTY - ONE OF MR DOBBINSON'S GOOD MEALS!



WELL, LET'S AMBLE ALONG, PRAD! IF THERE'S ANY MORE EXCITEMENT AHEAD, I KIND OF HATE THE THOUGHT OF MISSING IT!

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